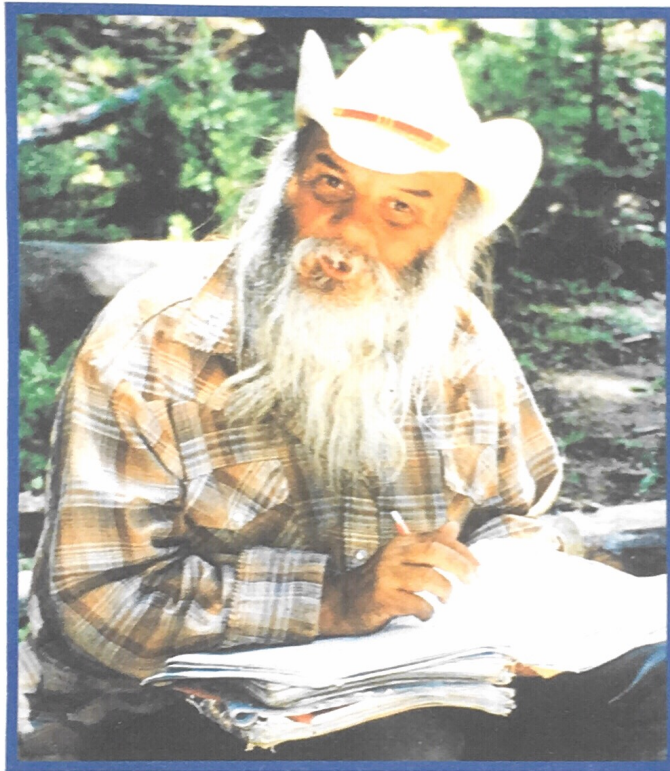




# Rainbow Family

## Life Stories



by Jodey Bateman.  
Interviews with Rainbow  
Family of Living Light  
folks conducted between  
1977 and 2008.  
Scanned in 2018.  
Jodey Bateman may be  
contacted on Facebook.

04.B

BARRY -  
(PLUNKER ADAMS)

"We Are a People,  
We Are a Culture"

[2 of 4]



BARRY

We've got a long, deep history and traditions. We are a civil rights movement in a way. We are leading people out of slavery. IP

We talked to people in Haight and Berkeley about all these visions. Then we walked out and left the young people and went off on our mountain trips. Now the young people have tried all the drinking, all the sex, all the drugs and they're bored. They've tried everything. Now they're coming to Rainbow Gatherings.

I was born in Helena, Montana, June 27, 1945 in the full moon of Christ. That is the day when Alice Bailey, who worked for a medium and was a very high being, wrote down the Great Invocation. We changed the word "men" in it to "humankind."

My dad was a farm hand. My mother you sort of might call a servant. She was one of them maids that dressed people. My mom and dad are divorced. When I was 13, he married his third or fourth wife and he came to own his own land. He was something between a farmer and a truck driver. I had a step father who was a carpenter.

I usually hung out by myself. I used to talk to ants and grasshoppers. When I was five I started having visions that ultimately led to the Rainbow Gathering. I started having recurring dreams of how two valleys came together - two rivers that ran into one that led to an ocean nearby - and there were people at peace. At first I thought the people were school teachers because teachers were the people I admired. I don't know if I told anybody about the dreams but my mother. She's not particularly religious, but she's a hell of a fine woman.

My people didn't go to church much. I don't think my dad ever went to church. Me and my little sister went to the Salvation Army church because we were after the trunk. When you went to church so many times, you got the key to the trunk and the trunk is full of goodies. The Salvation Army was run by Grandpa and Mrs. Nelson, this incredible couple who hung out with us. They let us drink coffee. That's a big thing for kids.

Reverend House, a Nazarene preacher, lived out of town. He



used to come and get two of my sisters and me and take us to church. I kind of dug going to church.

I graduated from Helena High School in 1963. I was pretty close to being the first male member of my family to graduate from high school. I had two brothers and three sisters and my younger sister was the only one in my immediate family who graduated from high school besides me.

I went into the Navy when I got out of high school. I went to Guam and Japan. I was part of a support group for Vietnam action. I was a communications technician for NSA, the National Security Agency, while I was in the service - the largest spy service on earth. The CIA gets all its information from the NSA.

When I was on leave from the Navy in San Francisco in January, '66, I went on Haight Street - the name got me. I met these people who lived in a place called the British Embassy, an abandoned building. Six or eight people - it was the first crash pad. They were people who liked people. I had never met anything like this before. I grew up a redneck where the only people you liked were your blood and you fought everyone else. There were artists and writers on the Haight and they liked people, all humanity, and that was new to me. The whole situation was like the gathering that had just started happening.

When I got out of the Navy in September, 1966, I moved to the Haight. I was one of 12 street people hanging around there. They didn't call us hippies then. I didn't take LSD until January, 1967 - or pot. It was so high just breathing in the Haight, taking acid was like a bring-down. I wore flowered patches on my knees and Christmas tree lights on my hat.

It was November, 1966, that a reporter for the San Francisco Examiner first started calling us hippies or hippies. That's when it came into nation wide use. That next weekend tourists came



to Haight Ashbury and they never stopped coming. When the first tourists came it was Sunday morning. Everybody was ready for them. We were lying on cars and standing on the street. We said "Hey, fello, we're people!" Then their cameras started going click, like "There's one!" Some of us started getting a little pissed off. Then the runaways - the sheep - started coming. It had only been a month since the story appeared in the Examiner and already the Haight was loaded to the gills with runaways. By December, 1966 there were 3,000 people in a ten block area.

The first time the Tactical Police Squad was ever used was on the hippies in the Haight - Christmas Eve, 1966. There was 2,000 of us singing with the Salvation Army "Deck the Halls." These two plain clothes cops came up. One of them threw a wine bottle on a cop car and all the cops came pouring out with their fancy new helmets and padded jackets and their new long clubs - dogs - tear gas. We went running. There were 100 arrests. People sang OM in the jail three days. I seen the same two cops start three riots in the Haight.

Emmet Grogan fought in the revolution in Ireland. Then he came to the Haight and started the Diggers. He wanted everything free - free food, free medical care. The Diggers and the Hip Job Co-op where I used to hang out and Allen Ginsberg held the first Human Be-in in January, 1967, in Golden Gate Park. There was 12,000 people. I was looking at this and I said "This is incredible," and I wasn't even stoned at the time. An airplane flew overhead and let Owsley out in a parachute and he threw acid in every direction.

Touristas kept on coming. The Haight had more visitors than any other place in California - more than Disneyland. Then after the tourists and the runaways the wolves came - scam artists who sold Love Burgers for a dollar. People who wanted to be bikers came - not like the Hell's Angels. The Angels were pretty mellow. Finally came the pimps. I left the Haight in April, 1967 when the first wine bottle busted on my doorstep and they started selling women on the street.



People think the Haight lasted a long time, but it was really short.

Me and some other folks packed up and went north to Aiden, California. Then on to Boulder, Colorado for a real auspicious day - May 26, 1968. There were hundreds of people who rolled into town too. A brother and sister named Jason and Diane had a vision and carried a wooden cross into Colorado. And some people thought the world might end. And we had a gathering of 1,000 people in the mountains above Berkeley. Walter Cronkite asked what we wanted. People said they were waiting for Christ. Others said they were waiting for the world to end. We settled down in Boulder and had a house in Boulder for run aways. Mayor Daley's daughter was one.

Then on the solstice, Dec 21, there was a cross in the sky and the mountain above Boulder lifted in a pool of light. We split up and went in all different directions. I went to New York through Miami. I had a place on 44th Street in New York. We invited people to a Christmas, 1968 gathering in Central Park in Sheep Meadows.

I worked in Doubleday Bookstore in Grand Central Station and this brother came in screaming he had to take the doors off. He had this real up tight rap about Nixon and the FBI. This was in January, 1969. I was supposed to get him out of the store. No one paid him attention. I said "In Montana we shake hands. What's your name, brother?" He barely touched my fingers and he screamed, "My name is Atlas!" like he was holding the world on his shoulders and ran away.

Me and a very bitter black guy named John Pope had a coffee house until John said "I'm wrecking the place" because one of our partners was from the government and was into scamming. First John sat down at the piano and sang a song about the crucifixion of Christ and how that was so much like Harlem. Then he smashed every piece of furniture in the place - last of all the stool I was sitting on.

One day I was in a circle of people in Central Park and



I was led out of the body by two beings to a place called the Hall of Records. And the book flew open to a situation where God - if you call him that, was sitting all alone and a light appeared - like flashes of nuclear fire. And thousands of souls appeared and they said, "We blew it," and God said, "I know. You gotta go back to do it all over again." And I saw how the flip side of that could be - the light could be our planet joining the rest of the universe.

Near Christmas, 1969, we seen the headlines WELCOME HOME and we didn't know what it was for. When we had our Christmas get-together, we found the headline was for the astronauts coming back from the moon. We had more get-togethers - the Living Theater was nude in public at one of our get togethers. Then we began to feel the city was closing around us, so we walked west across the George Washington Bridge. We went west. I was still having my vision of a tree and people gathering beneath it. I fasted a lot - that's when you can't find food. I was in Anchorage, Alaska where the Rockies cross the range that lead to the Aleutian chain. I looked down the Rockies. I seen the tree in Colorado. I was calling it the gathering because in Wolf Creek, Montana - I'm related to everybody there - we used to call it gatherings when all the men get drunk and fight and all the women get drunk and gossip.

I went to the Ute Sun Dance in Ignacio, Colorado. Two weeks later, I met two people in San Francisco in Golden Gate Park that I had met at the Sun Dance. They told me to come to a place called the Valley of Life, where everybody was reading the Bible. On the way there, I stopped in a bar where I met up with Tony Angel. I still had Christmas tree lights on my hat. I told about my vision.

#### COMMENT BY TONY ANGEL

I went down to Big Sur and worked in a bar. One day it was raining like a son of a bitch and Barry Plunker came in the bar.



He had on a hat with Christmas tree lights on it. I was waiting for all these bear hunters to come in the bar is great big son-of-a-guns from around Sandose. They would have ate Barry alive. I told him he had to leave. He split and I didn't see him again until Dominic took me to the Rainbow Gathering.

BARRY continued.

Four brothers in the Valley of Life and I went to find the two valleys that met near the sea in my vision. We went in an old rig to western Canada and one of the brothers, Jefferson Davis, had exactly the same vision. Then Randy had a vision of a woman with twin daughters who lived in a white house with a white picket fence who would help us find the place. We rode into this valley called Marble Mount in Washington State. We were very weary. We got out and started running down the road to this girl who looked about 18 who came running up toward us. We asked "Do you know of a place where two valleys meet with rivers that meet near the sea?"

She said, "I know the place. It's near Marble Mount."

We asked, "Do you have any children?"

She said, "Two."

We said, "But you look so young."

She said, "I had twin daughters when I was 17."

So finally we asked, "What kind of a house do you live in?"

and she said, "A white house with a white picket fence."

August 26, 1969, we rode into the valley and we all said, "I've seen this place before!" We saw three lights in the valley, forming a triangle. There was no electricity for them to come from.

We opened this place up and it's still one of the open places on the West Coast. We got on the radio in Seattle and people started flooding in. We fed 70 for breakfast and 100 for dinner. My cousin Chuck Wind song came there. Me and him and some others called ourselves the Outlaw Tribe of Marble Mount.



and we moved into the National Forest. We had about 40 to 60 people camp up there with us. We would make sortier into cities like <sup>FF</sup> San Fun-freako and people would say, "You smell like wood smoke. where are you from?"

And we'd say, "From deep in the woods."

They said, "Can we go?"

And we said, "Get your pack." And before they knew it, they were in the woods learning how to chop wood and all that.

Then I went to Bellingham, Washington and met a couple named Garrick and Karen, and they gave us a lot of spaghetti. They told us about something called Vortex. It was a two-part harmony - on one side people were all getting together. On the other side was the American Legion and Nixon and Agnew. And some bunch called the People's Army Jamboree wanted to have a Chicago, 1968 trip.

Before Vortex, we met at a place called Clear Lake. I met a man there named Bob Reynolds. He had been in charge of the security at Woodstock. He cut the chain and let everybody into Woodstock for free. At Clear Lake we discussed whether we wanted to go to Vortex or stay in the mountains. We decided to go to Vortex. We had a circle of 12 tipis at Vortex from the Eagle Scouts. And 75,000 people came to Vortex. A new group called New Riders of the Purple Sage played. Also B. B. King and Santana played. The Eagle Scout tipis were called Rainbow Tipis. So we sent a communication from Vortex Nation and that was the first time we used the word Rainbow.

We were surrounded by National Guard. They were right across from our tents. They would see all these hundreds of beautiful naked people. One of the guards took off his clothes and ran across the river to join us, and we put new clothes on him and helped him get away.

We had a huge God's Eye. It took 100 of us to get it to the stage.



We started the Point of Light prayer. By the end of the first line, the people - all 75,000 - stood up and chanted "Peace, Peace, Peace" until the sun went down. We didn't know anything about how to do big gatherings. We didn't have no organization or nothing. We had huge soup pots - 1,000 gallons each - that we got from a freighter. We fed people from them.

We heard the National Guard was going to clear us out, but the governor came and said we could stay there until we cleaned up. We had a double ring ceremony for a couple and two seven-foot high marijuana plants, one male, one female. We were as outrageous as we could be.

There was a lady named Bertha. Someone slipped her some acid without her knowing. No one should ever do that. It took a team of us to hold her down, but when she came to, the whole aura of the tipi circle changed. The tipis were closer in the circle there than they are now. And we could see the aura between the tipis and know just how things were going.

We left there and we called ourselves the Rainbow Family of Living Light. We had a Rainbow House for drifters in Eugene, Oregon. We got government commodity food. They would leave brothers who were mentally off on our doorsteps to take care of. People with no blankets and no food could come to the Rainbow House and sleep. We started a tree planting trip - winos and hippies. We had the first sister to plant trees in Oregon - a 12-year old named Singing Tree.

We put on a Renaissance Fair and Wayne Morse spoke there. He had been senator from Oregon until he spoke out against the Vietnam War. He was running again for senator - 79 years old - and we campaigned for him. We cut all the trails and set up the camping energy into Renaissance Fair. This was when Renaissance Fair was free. We decided that Rainbow energy was accessibility and acceptability for all people - even the



sister with lice and the brother looking for garbage to eat in the alley. We were still trying to decide about the gathering. One day I was in Feather River, California. I had a pen and I started writing like a Ouija board what turned out to be the invitation to the Colorado Rainbow Gathering. And I sent this invitation to Garrick at the Rainbow Farm. Garrick wrote it down in nice calligraphy and changed some of the words. We wore the invitation on the back of our jackets like motorcycle colors.

We started putting all our writings together for Rainbow Oracle. It's a really beautiful book. We wrote it in a cabin on Mount Hood in seven days and seven nights. It was printed and collated in seven days and seven nights. We handed it out then for free. We had an article in it about women's consciousness by a rabbi's sister about how we ought to say brother- and sister and familyhood instead of brotherhood. The book included a play we put on - Showdown at the O.D. Corral. They were moving smack into Eugene and we wanted to make a statement against hard drugs like Harry Heroin and Gollum Blue. We put on the play in Eugene. No one came but the cops, the dealers and us.

For a year we were incorporated as a church in Oregon. We took an 11-point program to Governor Tom McCall. We asked for different treatment for runaways. We asked for the state police to recognize long-haired people as human beings. All but one thing on our program have been realized: that one is that Oregon ends all wars forever.

At that time we started making contact with some of the Hopi people. I went to Hotevilla, Arizona and met an old Hopi man named David and Thomas Banyacya. And in Spring 1971 on Rainbow Farm they found a stone that has many faces in it. We took it to the Hopi asking whose stone this is. We thought it might be the Hopi missing tablet but they said no but it was a stone of power. The stone is now in Nebraska. It got into a wrong vehicle at a gathering and it's still there.



We went to see the Hopi in a blue bus. Just before we started, two sisters had a vision about a place we should have the gathering at a mountain beside a lake. We looked at the map and it showed Table Mountain by Granby Lake, in Colorado. We went on from the Hopi. Our bus broke down in front of the cops in Dyer, Arkansas. Out of 23 people on the bus, I was the only one with a straight ID - three were runaway kids, one was running from the Army, one was in the Weather Underground. There was also Phil Coyote, but he was an old runaway who had been hiding out in the Family. I've always treated Phil Coyote like my son. He's a beautiful brother. He's been with us since he was, I think, 12. I've read a poem he wrote before audiences. He always has a home with me.

Like there were three new runaways on the bus. We let the three kids hide in the bus and took out this straight guy on the bus who was half asleep. We took him to the cops and he whipped out his ID and he was AWOL from the Army. The sheriff came in the bus and found a heap of clothes. He asked, "What's under the clothes?"

I said, "Probably more clothes."

They pulled up the clothes and found the runaways. They took the three runaways and Phil Coyote to the p-farm while we sang "America the Beautiful." We drove on for ten miles and the bus broke down. Christmas Day, 1971.

I got into a VW with another brother. We went all the way to Florida giving out Rainbow Oracles. I went with three other brothers to the US Senate to hand out invitations to the gathering. The Capitol police chief gave us permission. He assigned one cop to each of us. We went to each senator's office in the Senate Office Building. We got talking to the cops. They were all West Virginia hillbillies who wanted to buy land back home. Garrick said he was a farmer. I said I was from Montana. We started talking crops and kids. So the



cops decided they liked us. They would hold the doors open for us. We went with some sisters to the House of Representatives with no police escort. It was January, 1972.

Rainbow was a consciousness still not a people. All these visions started mingling together. I was still in New York when people started showing up in Colorado. We had sent the Colorado State government an invitation a year before and they claimed they had never heard from us. I met with them and they asked all this stuff we didn't understand, like permits.

Then Chuck Windson met with a person called Paul Geisendorfer. He had been a Marine captain in Korea - a prisoner of war. He had a vision of a spiritual city on his lake and he agreed to help us. He owned an alpine meadow next to Strawberry Lake - 9,000 feet above sea level, and cold. It was near Table Mountain, the Arapaho Indian center of the universe. Granby was a small town nearby and the people freaked out when we started showing up. The Lieutenant Governor said, "We've got to get them sons of bitches out of there."

He said it was a rock festival. People came thinking it was a rock festival - expecting the Grateful Dead. They had every kind of cop there. The gathering was supposed to open June 17, the day the Watergate burglars were found. The government decided we were an unlawful assembly so they blockaded it. We had 700 or 800 people stuck in the mountains without food or medical supplies at Strawberry Lake. We had 3,000 people in a two-acre parking lot on the edge of Paul Geisendorfer's land.

On my birthday, June 27, we lined up all the buses to run the blockade with thousands of people following with torches. It looked like Exodus. The head of the state Highway Patrol said, "You need us." He came unarmed into the parking lot to wish me happy birthday. Everyone was hollering, "Hey, pig!" and spitting. He had a lot of courage. I said, "Hey everybody, this is a brother!"



So we rolled through town in the dark with no lights. We got lost. All 14 buses had to keep rolling through suburbia. We had to turn on the lights. Everybody was shouting "Everybody be quiet!", "Anybody got a toke?", "I gotta pee."

So we got back on the right road. We turned out the lights. The plan was, as soon as they tried to stop us, everybody would get out and hit the brush. We took the wrong road and went into a farmer's yard. The cops were waiting for us. They had shotguns and searchlights. The sheriff got in the lead bus and drove us toward the parking lot. (He had shaved off his mustache because somebody called him a hippie.) As he drove us back in the parking lot, everyone shouted, "Welcome home!"

Then we went to district court the next day. I told about the vision I seen. A sister who worked for a radio station in St. Louis read the invitation. The judge and the attorneys left the room. At 4:45 June 30, 1972, the judge ruled against us. It was Friday so we couldn't file an appeal.

At 4:30, the people in the parking lot had this huge council and they walked out of the parking lot and through the blockade. We said "If you arrest us, you'll have to feed us." So they let us go. We walked 16 miles up the trail and eight more around the lake. At first they wouldn't let us have shuttles, but 300 to 500 people a day were still showing up. We put panhandlers in the parking lot with trash cans for money for gas. We brought in 15,000 people. There were 3,000 people in jail for hitch hiking. We dumped the trash cans full of money on the desk at the police station to get the people out of jail. I think it took \$26 a person to get them out. We went there every day.

We had councils of 5,000 people in the meadow. That's where we started using the staff to let each person have a turn. We had all vegetarian kitchens but one. That was Harlem Kitchen at the trail head where the gathering began. The same as



we have Hobo Kitchen now at every gathering. We learned to co-operate and share and share alike. When we needed help, we got it. There were miracles. There were three people hurt - heavy car accident scene. We prayed. There was a double rainbow and they recovered. Olsen's Cafe in Granby complained, "Oh my God, rip off's!" and we brought them a gallon jug of money and told them to feed people for free; and several times a day we gave them another full jug of money.

There were a kind of natural choices that we were making at Colorado. Things came out of necessity. We tried to explain this to the government that was asking us how the hell we organized these things. Like we had 500 or 600 campfires. It was like Los Angeles. So that's where fire watch started. People don't know they shouldn't cut live trees. But someone showed up to warn them at the trailhead about it like we do now.

I felt a feeling of fulfillment. My vision was manifest on July 4. People started walking eight miles to Table Mountain before daybreak. We took a paraplegic in a wheelchair and ran him to the top of Table Mountain. At Table Mountain I looked up at the sky and I seen the face of the Great Being, and all the people I had loved and had given invitations to the gathering. The sky was as full of people as the earth. Just then a guy from Rolling Stone came up and interviewed me. They called me the Elmer Gantry of the hip.

The night of July 4, someone in a van in the parking lot called someone else a nark and cut him. So the guy who got cut went to a nurse and she called the cops. The cops came and dragged the people out of the van and started beating on them. There were 2,000 people in the parking lot and they started throwing rocks at the cops. Someone woke up Tony Angel of Shanti Sena - security - and he hollered, "Put down the fucking rocks!" A cop shoved a shot gun in Tony's belly and he hollered, "Put down that fucking shot gun!" and the cop did. The cops arrested 16 people and we bought them all out.



At the Colorado Gathering, this guy who had been a cop in D.C. said, "After all these years of beating heads in D.C., I'll say this, you people are different" and we shook hands. 601

The Wyoming Gathering was called by a group called the Children of Light among other names like the Christ Brotherhood. There were 1,700 people there and everyone could get to know everybody else. To get to the site we had to cross the Shoshone-

Arapaho Reservation. That caused some trouble. Some people felt the earth belongs to everyone, but some people who have been there longer are more part of the land. The Children of Light decided that they would go onto a place called Paradise Valley on the reservation and they got arrested. It got out that the Rainbows were invaders - it got out even to some of the tribes. I know that wasn't the intention of the Children of Light. They came from a pure place. But we don't go to Indian land without an invitation.

We had healing circles in Wyoming with what we call work councils now - finding people for fire watch and all. Michael John was there and a few other brothers and sisters in the healing circles and we opened up their chakras - the energy centers of their bodies - with massages.

There were Cree Indian singers and a Shoshone-Arapaho brother showed us how to make a sweat lodge. We learned a lot of things, like to put the sweats below the drinking water. We had a peyote ceremony with thousands of fresh green buttons. There was an Indian there - must have been about 18 or 19 - named Calls of Thunder. People said, "There's an Indian. Let him show us the way" but he said, "I can't show you the way. I'm just here to enjoy. I can't take part in your medicine because I've been taught heavy medicine by the elders in a very specific way." He said his name Calls of Thunder - and the thunder rolled across the sky. We put the peyote on the blanket and